

# AUSTRALIAN SOUTH DEVONS – NEWSLETTER NO 2 - APRIL 2018

Welcome to the second newsletter for the year.

First an apology to Rick McDouall – I made a mistake with his phone number in the last newsletter. I had a brain fade and put half of his number and half of my sisters (who lives in northern NSW too) – sorry everyone. Because of the continuing dry weather, there will be no tour associated with the AGM. In fact, Rick is not even sure he will be able to make the meeting – making sure the stock are watered is a constant worry for him (and Sue) at present – most unusual for that area.

**More information on the upcoming election of Councillors and AGM.**

**The AGM will be held at 5pm on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> May in the Uniting Church hall, cnr Canterbury and Diary Streets Casino. It is 2 blocks west of McDonalds and approx. 4 blocks from the Cecil Hotel where we are having dinner at 7.30 pm. The AGM is scheduled from 5 – 7 pm so you may need to either be a quick-change artist or come dressed as you mean to go to dinner. Apparently, it may be a good idea to park at the Hall and walk to the Hotel.**

Under the rules of the Constitution, two Councillors had to stand down this year, however they are available for re-election. Those two were Rick McDouall and Narelle Rossiter. You should have received your information from David McDonald regarding nominations for Council by the time this Newsletter arrives. Time is of the essence here, so have a think about the direction you want the Society to take and nominate accordingly. Should there be more than 3 nominations, a vote will be required. Also remember that there are no longer State based positions, simply Councillors. It's up to the members to make sure there is a geographic distribution of representatives. If you don't do anything about nominating someone (or getting yourself nominated) you will have no right to complain about the outcomes.

**In other words – to put it bluntly – it's put up or shut up time folks!**

Next cab off the rank – the Australian South Devons Facebook (**Australian South Devons**) page and how it works. This page was started after the 2016 Kangaroo Island AGM. It is set up on my Facebook account so everything that I put on there has my name on it – even if I comment on something. I share lots of articles from various different sources – I do not necessarily agree with all of them; in fact, I may seriously disagree with some of them. I put them there to generate conversation, or get people thinking about what is going on in the wider world of agriculture and cattle breeding. I like to see comments put on there because at least it means that someone is reading the post. Anyone can comment but you need to send articles to me for posting on the page. I can, and do, happily share photos and news across from your own pages. I would particularly like to see lots more photos of SD people and cattle out and about at shows and field days, as well as photos from home. I try to share photos around but if you don't send them to me I can't use them. If you know of a page that regularly has

interesting articles, can you please let me know (invite me to like it?) because it gives me a wider base to use for information. I already use Beef Central, Qld Country Life and Stock and Land. I regularly share photos from our overseas SD breeders.

One more request regarding the Facebook page. Apparently, Facebook have changed the algorithm that governs what feeds you receive. Can you please post a sticker or a comment when you view the SD page, so you keep receiving it? I have noticed I wasn't receiving some posts I had previously been following – the computer boffins in their wisdom have been tinkering.

### **LINES FAMILY RECEIVE COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD.**

“The Lines Family of Gum Hill South Devon Stud were honoured to receive the Hon Rowan Ramsay MP Community Service Award at the Burra Community School Presentation night in December 2017. This award highlighted community input by the family, Glan and Daphne, Justin and Anthea, to the Burra and District Community through support and involvement as volunteers and Office Bearers in and for many local organisations over the years. The Award also recognised the support of the family over a 40-year period, to the Schools Led Steer Programme for the Royal Adelaide Show. When the Burra School Agricultural Section launched their steer programme, a Gum Hill Steer was one of their first two entrants, and the Burra Community School and Gum Hill have had a continuous partnership ever since, which we look forward to continuing for many years to come.”

While there are a number of SD breeders who support schools, probably none of us have such a long and continuous relationship as Gum Hill. Burra and Clare schools have steers again this year and a new entrant Karoonda (whose teacher had exposure to SD during time at Burra, so she knew the value of the SD temperament.

*There will be a photo of this presentation in the next newsletter – it hasn't arrived in time for this one.*



**While we are on the subject of schools and South Devons;** the ag students at Casino High School (NSW) have been enjoying showing their young heifer Athlone Nayla at a couple of local shows. The kids love handling her and have also halter broken their first home bred heifer whom they have named Lilo (after a Disney character). Lilo is by the 2016 Ekka champion Kildare Likabull and is about 4 months old.

**Queensland show results;**

The McUtchen family (Jambili Stud) have been out and about regularly with their own and the Kildare show team – with Excellent results. Kildare Monsieur was Supreme Interbreed bull at the recent Jandowae show – first time I have known a South Devon bull to win this award in the ten years we have been involved with the stud side of the breed.

SD cattle have been represented at Cooyar, Bell, Oakey, Jandowae, Toowoomba and Dalby shows with the following results.



**Kildare Monsieur;**

(Kildare Jade/Kildare Dianna 36) **Bell;** Res Jr Champion.

**Oakey;** Champion SD Bull

**Jandowae;** Champion SD bull and Supreme Champion Interbreed Bull

**Toowoomba;** Junior Champion SD Bull.



**Jambili Nonu;**

(MJB United 333/Davelle Fearless Iris)

**Bell;** Jr and Grand Champion SD Bull

**Toowoomba;** Calf and Grand Champion SD.

**Dalby;** Jr and Grand Champion SD Bull. Champion British Bull.



**Kildare Red Wing (DLCC Durango 26Z/Kildare Red 13)**

**Cooyar;** Reserve Senior Ch Bos Taurus Bull

**Bell;** Senior Champ SD Bull

**Oakey;** Senior Ch British Bull



**Jandowae;** Senior Ch British Bull

**Toowoomba;** Senior Ch SD Bull



**Kildare Pastiche;**

(DLCC Durango  
26Z/Kildare Pastiche 7)

**Bell;** Champion SD Cow

**Jandowae;** Res Ch  
Senior British Cow

**Toowoomba;** Senior  
and Grand Champion SD  
Cow.

(Calf is Kildare Sassy 28  
by Davelle Prog  
Blackrock H17)



**Kildare Sassy;**

**DLCC Durango  
26Z/Kildare Dianna  
8o)**

**Cooyar;** Res Senior  
Champion Bos Taurus  
Female

**Oakey;** Senior and  
Grand Champion British  
Female

**Dalby;** Senior and  
Grand Champion British  
Female



**Jambili Nala**

(Torr Down Merlin  
20/Athlone Gardenia)

**Bell;** Junior Champion SD  
Female

**Dalby;** Res Jr Champion  
British Female

This is Rory McUtchen (aged  
8). Nala is 8 months old.

At Dalby show, South Devons won both Champion British Bull and Champion British Female awards, with Jambili Nonu taking out the Bull award and Kildare Sassy the Female. All that hard work is starting to pay off, with both judges and cattle people alike starting to comment on the quality of South Devons and what they can offer the cattle industry.



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South Devon steers once again performed extremely well at the annual Lardner Park Grass Fed Steer Trials in Gippsland. Three teams were entered; Peter and Nellie Hutchinson (Winterwood); The Garrett Family (Brejayanne) and Chris and Leonie Daley (The Bend). ***Photo below is Winterwood steers.***



**The Winterwood steers won the highest weight gain again - with an average of 1.49 kg/day – they have been consistent winners of this trophy over a long period of time. The Bend were placed second overall for Combined Carcase and Weight gain and were 4<sup>th</sup> in the highest daily**

**weight gain; and Brejayanne were placed 6<sup>th</sup> in the highest overall daily weight gain.**



For those who are unaware of the Lardner Park Steer Trials, I have copied the following information from their result booklet.

'The Lardner park Steer Trial provides valuable information on the growth and carcase quality of



the steers entered. It enables all those that interact with the Trial to gain an improved understanding of live steer assessment, market requirements and the impact of feed quality on the growth and fattening ability of the stock. It is currently the only grass-based steer trial in Australia. The steer trial provides a valuable forum for discussion of many aspects of the cattle industry. ***The Bend steers shown in above photo.***

***Brejayanne steers below.***



Cattle were inducted onto the property on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July 2017, with the steer trial commencing on 10<sup>th</sup> July. Cattle were weighed regularly, and the weighing days allowed interested parties to view the progress of the stock.

In 2017 there was one turnoff – standard domestic trade.

Cattle had to meet the following specifications for the standard domestic trade when they were turned off.

Hot standard carcase weight      210 – 285 kg

Fat range (P8)                      8 – 14 mm

Penalties were imposed if cattle fell outside specifications for carcase weight.

To be in contention for the Highest Weight Gain Pair, both animals in the pair had to fall within the weight specifications.'

## **LARDNER PARK FIELD DAYS.**



Brejayanne South Devons (the Garratt family) kept the South Devon flag flying at the recent Lardner field days in Victoria.

Chris and Leonie Daley (who spent many years holding the fort) helped out on one of the days – for anyone who has undertaken a multiday event like this, it is a big undertaking and any assistance other SD members can provide is always welcome.

Gaylene reported as follows; ' As usual for our area we had weather extremes of 25 – 26 degrees on Thursday and Friday, and then on Saturday morning the weather turned, and we had strong winds and driving rain. We had a lot of interest from commercial cattlemen who can see for themselves the benefits of using a South Devon bull over their herds. Local Steer Trial results don't lie and are worth entering to get our little-known breed out there.

Some of the enquiries definitely stemmed from the great results achieved by the South Devon entries in the recent Lardner Grass Fed Trials. I recently spoke to a buyer at a local meatworks, and he is well aware of our breed and only had good things to say. He only wished there were more of our cattle around to buy.



The two heifers did really well for their first time in public. It never ceases to amaze just how placid and easy to train our cattle are. Special thanks also to Emily, Mia and Alex, without whom the display would never have happened.

*In the next newsletter, I hope to have an article on some South Devon cross steers and heifers which have been shown with great success in the South Burnett area of Queensland. Brian and Gloria Smith first came to our attention last year (while we were in South Africa actually, via facebook) when they had a big win at Biggenden show with their SD x Droughtmaster steer. This year they have more of these cattle and from all accounts are having a very winning time at the local shows. Brian is a carrier so he sees, and handles, thousands of cattle. He cannot believe that more people do not use SD not only for their temperament, but also for their carcase qualities.*

*The Smiths have young grandchildren and have no worries about them helping with the cattle because of their wonderful temperament. I believe the grandkids have started claiming some of these cattle for themselves – as grandkids are apt to do!*

***If anyone else knows of SD or SD cross cattle out and about in led steer/heifer or carcase classes, can you please find out some details***

***(with photos if possible) and forward them to me for inclusion. I also hope to have the results of the inaugural South Coast (NSW) steer competition organised by Mick Hamilton and his band of helpers.***

Ashlea (Ross and Dell Cauley) report these recent meatworks sales results.

12 MSA heifers av dressed weight 319 kg; av ema 94; av fat 9 ml – av return \$1642.

6 cows av 410 kg dressed weight, av return \$1787/hd.

The following article has resulted from a couple of conversations I had with other breeders, who had asked me the relevance of the SProfit index. I asked David Leese to compare and contrast BreedPlan and the SProfit index for this newsletter – many thanks to David for the following article.

### **“BreedPlan versus \$Profit**

To start let’s look at both –

BreedPlan is a genetic evaluation system for beef cattle. BreedPlan produces Estimated Breeding Values (EBVs) for cattle for a range of important production traits.

\$Profit is a multi-breed index that tells you which calves make you the most profit, from birth to slaughter if you retain ownership and keep replacements. \$Profit is provided Leachman Cattle of Colorado (LCoC).

Already there is a difference, as BreedPlan is the evaluation system, whilst \$Profit is an index of an evaluation system developed by LCoC.

I was part of the Technical Committee which developed the South Devon Indexes. These Indexes combine all available data on measured traits (where EBVs are produced) to produce market specific outcomes – Vealer, Supermarket and Export. A dollar value is calculated on each index, with the higher number the better expected outcome.

\$Profit and the South Devon Indexes are fundamentally similar, however \$Profit is only 1 market specific outcome. LCoC does have other Indexes – Feeder, Ranch and Terminal.

Indexes have been used for many years in all types of livestock production systems to find the genetics that would benefit a market. Pig and chicken could be seen as the best users of indexes with their success in delivering market specific outcomes over many years. In the dairy industry the Holstein Friesian breed embraced EBV’s early. In the beef cattle industry the Angus could be seen as the early adopters and now leaders, in my opinion they have used this data to secure many markets.

**“Any system relies on the collection of accurate and reliable data”.**

This is the most contentious part of both systems. Many complain and question accuracy, “how accurate it can be as everyone’s productions systems are different as well as environments.” Yes, this is a concern, especially for a small group analysis. Analysis over time, with many herds and animals, the addition of generational data, will produce a reliable result.

If you abuse the system, it will come back and bite you!! (I have seen this).



Many overlook the accuracy figures for each trait, which are very important. It takes years and many generations, to get to 75% accuracy, which is seen as the minimum. It can take up to 20 years to get good reliable data with the use of sharing genetics. The best way to get better accuracy is for a group of breeders to use a sire in AI programs and record all calves throughout the whole system. It can be a slow process, but the knowledge is so powerful.

Data collected for both is very similar. Birth Weight, 200 Days (Weaning Weight), 400 Days (Yearling Weight), 600 Days (\$Profit don't collect this data), Mature Cow Weight, Date of AI or Date Bull Put In (Gestation Length), Scans (eye muscle, rump and rib fat and intra muscular fat), Scrotal (bulls), Hip Height (\$Profit) and Feed Efficiency (\$Profit - there is little calculation of feed efficiency in Australia- personally I think it's something to take note of).

This data is used to derive Estimated Breeding Values for individual traits, which are important if you want to target a specific trait eg 200-day growth. However, Indexes simplify this process into single numbers.

As stated above, South Devon selection indexes are calculated for three market specifications; namely Vealer, Supermarket and Export Maternal. These Indexes relate to typical South Devon herds in temperate Australia targeting these specifications –

- **Vealer Index (\$)** - Estimates the genetic differences between animals in net profitability per cow joined for an example commercial herd targeting vealer production. Vealers are finished on grass and are marketed at 320 kg live weight (180 kg HSCW and 4 mm P8 fat depth) at 10 months of age. Daughters are retained for breeding. No marbling is required.
- **Supermarket Index (\$)** - Estimates the genetic differences between animals in net profitability per cow joined for an example commercial herd targeting the domestic supermarket trade. Steers are either finished on grass or grain (eg 70 days). Steers are marketed at 450 kg live weight (250 kg HSCW and 12 mm P8 fat depth) at 15 months of age. Daughters are retained for breeding. In response to industry feedback regarding eating quality and tenderness, a small premium has been placed on marbling.
- **Export Maternal Index (\$)** - Estimates the genetic differences between animals in net profitability per cow joined for an example commercial herd targeting steers for the export market being finished off grass or through a mid-fed feeding program (eg 125 days). Steers are assumed marketed at 600 kg live weight (330 kg HSCW and 20 mm P8 fat depth) at 24 months of age. Daughters are retained for breeding. In response to industry feedback regarding eating quality and tenderness, a small premium has been placed on marbling.

What does the single number, \$Profit do? \$Profit helps you compare what different bulls are worth, so you can easily find the best bull to improve your herd. Put simply, it does the selection work for you. Instead of working out which of the 20+ EBVs are most helpful to your herd, \$Profit does the analysis for you, and sums it up in one figure.

How \$Profit works? \$Profit assumes that the average commercial bull will have 100 progeny over its lifetime. The model assumes that you keep 30% of your heifers as replacements and that you retain ownership of the remainder of the calves through finishing and sell on a grid.

Many don't retain ownership, but doesn't it make the most sense to select from birth all the way to slaughter?

The simulation model then factors in all of the effects on both income and expense to come up with a net profit figure for each bull. \$Profit allows you to compare any two bulls and calculate the difference in profit that they are expected to generate in your herd. Let's compare a \$10,000 \$Profit bull to \$6,000 \$Profit bull (the average 2008 born Angus bull). The predicted difference between the bulls is \$4,000 or about \$40 per calf. \$Profit works for us and it will work for you too.

What traits are included in \$Profit:

\$Profit includes nearly every trait that impacts profitability. The effect of most traits on profit is fairly simple to understand. Here is the list of what is included and its effect:

### **Revenue Traits**

- Calving ease = more live calves
- Weaning and yearling EBV = more growth & weight for age
- Fertility (days to conception) = Earlier conceptions post calving and earlier puberty in heifers
- Carcass weight = Heavier carcass weights
- Marbling = better meat quality and value
- Ribeye area = value as impacts yield grade
- % Retail Product = more yield is more saleable beef

### **Cost Traits**

- Cow mature size = in general bigger eats more
- Cow intake = more intake costs more
- Feedlot feed efficiency = cost of gain

Some traits are not so easily characterized for \$Profit. Milk, for example, is a good thing until you get too much. When over +25, milk ABE has a more negative effect on fertility than it has a positive effect on weaning weight. There are a few traits not yet included in \$Profit: longevity, structure, and disposition. These traits are important but difficult to express in dollars.

\$Profit is the largest breeder owned data base in the industry with over 1,000,000 records - "from herds in the USA, UK, New Zealand and Australia"

### **Summary**

I am biased to a performance recording system and analysis. I want to know how my animals perform. My eyes can't tell me everything.

The South Devon has many desirable traits for a commercial breeder, but it still has a history of many undesirable traits. A research of the needs of commercial breeders have found they want –

- Birth Weight - birthweights to average between 30-40 kg (we don't keep a calf over 45kg). They want vibrant and thrifty calves when they hit the ground, not big dopey ones.

- Average growth – They want good early growth, curve benders, but tapering off to keep breeding females moderate (600-700kg).
- Excellent carcase traits – they demand high quality high yielding carcasses.
- Fertility - Fertility drives everything

How do you rank and measure yourselves?

We became financial members of LCoC \$Profit in 2017 to benefit from a very large worldwide multi-breed analysis. BreedPlan doesn't offer this and I can't see this changing anytime soon. We wanted a more in-depth analysis with figures on traits that have a global weighting. The other reason, there are so few South Devon breeders performance recording now.

We like how \$Profit is calculated. We like which traits are positive contributors and the negatives ones.

Using an index whether through BreedPlan or LCoC will provide a positive outcome to your beef business.

We want to continue to find the animals that meet market needs, and preferably a South Devon. Isn't this every South Devon breeders goal?

David Leese  
Davelle South Devons"

### **SOME MORE SNIPPETS FROM THE PAST. Courtesy of Daphne Lines.**

'Points of interest from newsletter 2.

The Presidents message concentrated on the fee structure that had been set at the inaugural meeting,

Subscriptions were a contentious issue and created much discussion. It was agreed to retain the \$50. Membership after looking at the advantages and disadvantages for a fee reduction and other associated fees which had been set earlier.

Federal Council had met for a lengthy 6-hour meeting with no break, with the constitution being the major topic. Rules and regulations, a banner and classification of pure bred cattle were the dominant subjects.

A report of the national Sale, (*I also found the catalogue of that sale*) held at Shepparton, and despite the climate of the Beef industry at that time, ended with a satisfactory result. 5 purebred females were sold to average \$1650, top price was \$3150, and a 6<sup>th</sup> female passed in at \$1450 was later sold. Nine 2<sup>nd</sup> cross females all sold to the top of \$675. Averaging \$355. The bull demand was slower as many of the bulls offered, although well-presented, were from sires who had semen available which affected demand. Many lessons were learned at the sale.

Carcase results were emerging. At the Lang Lang carcase competition South Devons were awarded the champion vealer, Champion in the Home Trade Section, Champion of Show. (*It is possible that the winners were bred by Stefan Spiker and*



Ray Anderson, this is open to clarification) and in the SA Carcase Competition, Champion and Reserve Champion were both South Devons, 87 and 84 points while the 3<sup>rd</sup> placing dropped to the low 70's. (Again, no names but I would suggest these animals was bred by either the Scragg's or Craig's)

In the past three years in WA Cross animals have had 12 wins, 3 Champions and 1 Reserve Champion plus innumerable placings.

Federal Council in addition to the members mentioned in the last report were Stan Dorman, Stefan Spiker, Swegn Smith and Bruce Ironmonger.'



*This photo is a little out of context but I'm trying to juggle articles and their placement.*

This is 6-year-old Callum McUtchen and his South Devon cross steer Redfoo. They've been carving a successful path through the lightweight steer classes at various shows this year and garnering quite a fan club. There

have been numerous enquiries regarding the purchase of Redfoo, but he's not going anywhere! Results include 1<sup>st</sup> Lightweight steer at Oakey, Bell and Dalby Shows and 1<sup>st</sup> Lightweight and Reserve Champion Steer at Jandowae and Toowoomba.

At one show, the highlight for Callum wasn't so much the broad ribbon they won but the fact that it was his father they had beaten.



Not to be outdone by her brother – this is 4-year-old Alana McUtchen with **Dude**, her SD x steer (by an Ashlea bull), waiting for Junior Handlers at Dalby show.

**The next newsletter is due around the end of June. It will contain any news generated from the AGM, results from Beef 2018 in Rockhampton, photos from the Farmfest field days in Qld and any**

**other news I have been provided with. Articles and photos need to be sent to me by mid-June or I cannot guarantee their inclusion.**

*Condolences to Ern Bright who lost his South Devon cattle to suspected botulism, and to Colin Chevalley who lost two bulls to suspected 3-day sickness complications.*

My email address is; [gh.lindsay@bigpond.com](mailto:gh.lindsay@bigpond.com).

Hope you enjoy the newsletter – Heather Lindsay (Editor)